

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the outstanding non-final Office Action mailed June 2, 2003. Applicants have amended the specification to address various inadvertent errors in the original specification. Applicants believe that no new matter has been added. Reconsideration and allowance of the application and claims are respectfully requested.

I. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Office Action rejects claims 1 – 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,576,911 to Porter (“the ‘911 patent”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,587,877 to Ryan *et al.* (“the ‘877 patent”) and further in view of U.S. Patent No 6,000,609 to Gokcebay *et al.* (“the ‘609 patent”).

Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn for at least the following reasons. First, the Examiner has not established a prima facie case of obviousness because the Examiner has failed to establish the proper motivation, suggestion, or other teaching that would lead a person of ordinary skill in the art to combine the ‘911 patent with the ‘877 patent and the ‘609 patent in such a manner as to render obvious claims 1 – 15. Furthermore, even assuming for the sake of argument that the Examiner has shown the requisite suggestion or motivation to modify or combine the three references, any combination of these references fails to disclose, teach, or suggest each and every element of claims 1 – 15. Accordingly, for this additional reason Applicants respectfully request that the rejection be withdrawn and claims 1 – 15 be allowed.

a. Claims 1 - 14

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of the ‘911 patent, the ‘877 patent, and the ‘609 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest each and every claim in

independent claims 1 and 8. MPEP §2143.03. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of these three references fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the feature of “a **bulk access** apparatus” that covers “a **plurality of openings** in a data storage system,” as recited in the system of independent claim 1 and the data storage system of claim 8.

Unlike independent claims 1 and 8, each of the ‘911 patent, the ‘877 patent, and the ‘609 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a “**bulk access** apparatus” covering “a **plurality of openings** in a data storage system.” The bulk access apparatus recited in independent claims 1 and 8 provides a single point of access to the plurality of media storage devices in the data storage system. In other words, the bulk access apparatus provides a single point of access to **more than one opening** in the data storage system.

Applicants note that the Office Action specifically admits that the ‘911 patent “fails to teach **plural** media storage devices.” In this regard, Applicants respectfully submit that the door 20 disclosed in the ‘911 patent is not a **bulk access** apparatus that provides access to a plurality of media storage devices. Thus, the ‘911 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest suggest a “**bulk access** apparatus” covering “a **plurality of openings** in a data storage system,” as recited in independent claims 1 and 8.

Applicants respectfully submit that the ‘877 patent also fails to disclose, teach, or suggest this feature. For the sake of argument, the ‘877 patent may teach plural media storage devices. However, the ‘877 patent does not disclose, teach, or suggest a “**bulk access** apparatus” covering “a **plurality of openings** in a data storage system.” Applicants note that the ‘877 patent merely teaches using a **plurality of doors** (12) such that each door (12) provides access to a media storage device – not a **bulk access** apparatus. Clearly, a plurality of doors (12) does not amount to a bulk access apparatus as recited in independent claims 1 and 8.

The '609 patent also fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a “***bulk access*** apparatus” covering “***a plurality of openings*** in a data storage system,” as recited in independent claims 1 and 8. In fact, the '609 patent only discloses a mechanical/electronic lock and key.

Therefore, each of the '911 patent, the '877 patent, and the '609 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest a “***bulk access*** apparatus” covering “***a plurality of openings*** in a data storage system,” as recited in independent claims 1 and 8. Therefore, independent claims 1 and 8 are patentable over the '911 patent in view of the '877 patent and further in view of the '609 patent because any combination of these three patents still fails to disclose, teach, or suggest this claimed feature. Furthermore, claims 2 – 7 (which depend from independent claim 1) and claims 9 – 14 (which depend from independent claims 8) are also patentable over the '911 patent in view of the '877 patent and further in view of the '609 patent for at least the reason that they contain all of the features of the corresponding independent claim. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1 – 14 be withdrawn and the claims be allowed.

b. Claim 15

Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of the '911 patent, the '877 patent, and the '609 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest each and every claim in independent claim 15. Specifically, Applicants respectfully submit that the combination of these three references fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the feature of “***means for covering a plurality of openings*** in the data storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices,” as recited in method of claim 15.

Applicants note that the Office Action specifically admits that the '911 patent “fails to teach ***plural*** media storage devices.” In this regard, Applicants respectfully submit that the door 20 disclosed in the '911 does not provide access to a plurality of media storage devices.

Thus, the '911 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the feature of "***means for covering a plurality of openings*** in the data storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices," as recited in method of claim 15.

Applicants respectfully submit that the '877 patent also fails to disclose, teach, or suggest this feature. For the sake of argument, the '877 patent may teach plural media storage devices. However, the '877 patent does not disclose, teach, or suggest a "***means for covering a plurality of openings*** in the data storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices," as recited in method of claim 15. Applicants note that the '877 patent merely teaches using a ***plurality of doors*** (12) such that each door (12) provides access to a media storage device. Therefore, each door (12) only provides access to a single media storage device -- not a plurality of media storage devices.

The '609 patent also fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the feature of "***means for covering a plurality of openings*** in the data storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices," as recited in method of claim 15. In fact, the '609 patent only discloses a mechanical/electronic lock and key.

Therefore, each of the '911 patent, the '877 patent, and the '609 patent fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the feature of "***means for covering a plurality of openings*** in the data storage system, each of the openings providing access to one of the media storage devices," as recited in the method of claim 15. Therefore, independent claim 15 is patentable over the '911 patent in view of the '877 patent and further in view of the '609 patent because any combination of these three patents still fails to disclose, teach, or suggest this claimed feature. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 15 be withdrawn and the claim be allowed.

CONCLUSION

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that all objections and/or rejections have been traversed, rendered moot, and/or accommodated, and that pending claims 1 – 15 are in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the present application and all pending claims are hereby courteously requested. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephonic conference would expedite the examination of this matter, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (770) 933-9500.

Respectfully submitted,



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